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Regular mail order catalogs may be used as a source of material for teaching many practical lessons to groups of students who may be potential drop-outs. A unit centering about the use of such catalogs was developed in a class of students fourteen years of age or older but still in elementary school. Looking up and ordering items from a catalog can afford many opportunities for instruction in arithmetic, vocabulary building, and choice making. The present unit grew out of a need to teach the students proper attire. Use of catalogs attracted their immediate attention. The Unit on clothing grew into other units on business and investigating various types of materials used in clothing. Information listed is intended primarily for the teacher, but materials are included that can be used by pupils. (Appendix contains information about clothing, vocabulary, and applicable arithmetic problems).

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ERIC Form 1

THE CATALOG

ED001030

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DISTRICT ELEVEN

DONT SHOP WITH

BLINDERS ON

SEE WHAT YOU BUY

CHICAGO PROJECT GREAT CITIES SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

A UNIT FOR THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

DEVELOPED IN THE STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS SCHOOL

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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for Instruction

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Classroom Teacher

PREFACE

As part of a study carried on in the fourteen largest cities of the United States, an experimental program was introduced in District Eleven, in September, 1960, involving pupils 14 years of age or older, who were still in elementary school. Pupils from eight schools were grouped into special classes in three centers. Later these classes were consolidated into one center at the Stephen A. Douglas School.

Many of these overage pupils had become discouraged because of failure and lack of success. They were potential drop outs, if not in elementary school, then in high school. For this reason it was essential that they be encouraged to remain in school. In an effort to improve the attitudes of these pupils, as well as to increase their academic achievements so that they might successfully meet the challenge of the high school curriculum, it was felt that new approaches to learning should be considered.

Teachers working with these potential drop outs have experimented with various types of teaching techniques, as well as with subject matter geared to meet the needs and achievement levels of these pupils.

The unit on Catalog Buying developed by Mrs. Lorraine Joseph is an attempt to acquaint pupils with the proper techniques in buying from catalogs. All people, city dwellers as well as those from rural areas, shop from catalogs. It is imperative then, that pupils learn how to use catalogs discriminately. They must be taught, not only the mechanics of shopping from a catalog, but how to compare items advertised in various catalogs with each other, and with the same items available in local stores.

Adults and children alike enjoy looking through catalogs, hence such a unit is self-motivating. Problems taken from catalog listings are realistic and interesting to pupils, and help to develop those skills and techniques needed in all areas of instruction. Pupils do not tire of using this material, thus it is a valuable supplement to regular textbooks.

The information listed in this unit is intended primaarily for the teacher, but there are also suggestions and sample material that can be used by pupils. It is felt that the materials are such that this unit could be of value to other teachers with various types of pupils. It can be expanded or curtailed to meet the needs of any particular group. It is with this thought in mind that it is presented for your consideration.

WALTER R. FASAN
Principal
Stephen A. Douglas School

OVERVIEW

Catalogs are big business. The sales volume they produce runs into hundreds of millions of dollars. Thousands of men and women get employment in every phase of this big business enterprise. In the preparation of the catalog alone, there are staffs to compile, edit, print and produce. Merchandise departments hire more thousands. Catalog shopping centers, telephone shopping service, as well as the mail order department whose foundations were laid at the turn of the century in many concers, employ thousands more and supply millions of customers with merchandise to supply every family and home need. These business concerns open new avenues of employment to many poeple in a labor market changed by changes in technology.

There has been a radical change in modern retailing in the last decade. This is due to the insistent changes in the consumer's demand for services. Lack of parking space, need for quality and fashion right merchandise, institution of credit, revolutionary transition in urban modernization and suburban growth, all are reflected in changing patterns of purchasing and broad selection of merchandise. Distribution of catalogs of the major mail order houses occurs with seasonal regularity. Due to low expense, merchandising with a flair, and convenience, these catalogs grew in size and service year after year. One company has a 1,300 page volume with 125,000 items including such diverse merchandise as do-it-yourself kayak kits and automatic calculators.

Another 1962 catalog lists a new tour service operated by the American Express Company. This catalog of 1,540 pages lists approximately 140,000 items. "Discount Sales" books, offered by many

companies list low price merchandise ordinarily found in discount stores. Many companies offer insurance policies in subsidiary companies. Thus it becomes evident that catalogs are a way of life in the 1960's and as educators we should include them in the areas of learning.

Whether or not these companies realize it, they are in the text-book publishing business. There seems to be a rising trend to shop from catalogs. The reading and arithmetic skills involved, require special instructions for accurate interpretation. They offer an avenue of interest into social studies as well - for merchandise from distant places ready to be shipped to other far away places extends the concept of one world and narrows our focus of space and time. Much of the vocabulary used in this advertising medium is different from that found in reading standardized texts. Words such as wholesale, bonus, customized - phrases like name brands, shipping charges, budget power, in transit, etc. are used commonly in all catalogs, and require the kind of translation used in teaching a foreign language - which in a sense it is. Abbreviations used in these books include many rarely found in standardized English text-books. Examples are: sh. wt. (shipping weight), batts. (batteries), incl.cst. mail (include cost of mailing), and ass't. (assorted).

Codes for prices appear in many wholesale catalogs, measurements are required for some orders, addition of a federal excise tax, sales tax, and shipping costs, are only a few of the special kinds of arithmetic knowledge required. As we become aware of the expanding world which the youth of today face in the not-so distant future, teachers too, must broaden the base upon which the educational foundations rest.

Mrs. Lorraine Joseph of the Douglas School Special Project in the Great Cities School Improvement Program, has outlined a unit of four weeks duration. Shopping for clothes is an all year process. In actuality, due to the interest she stimulated, the unit continues to increase in scope as her classes become involved in season to season purchases. These are not only purchases of clothing, but gift and utility items which families need or would like to buy. Catalogs are "wish books" for them. Deeper and more meaningful problems of our society can be learned by this uniquely American way of shopping.

HELEN F. ISBITZ
Assistant Principal

PLANNING OUR SCHOOL WARDROBE

Introduction:

Originally mail order houses served people in rural communities who could not get to a store as often as they needed. Today, all of the large department stores, the so-called "discount stores", and the mail order houses, publish and supply through their circulation departments, catalogs. Thousands of customers in large cities as well as those in small towns, find it easier to shop by catalog. These attractive books, so universally used, require special reading vocabulary and arithmetic techniques in order to utilize them to the best advantage.

The teenager is intensely interested and concerned about his appearance. A unit dealing with clothing should appeal to him. We are on sound educational grounds when we start with pupil interest. This unit was prepared for use during a four week period. No attempt has been made to include all of the possibilities for learning from such a unit. In other places and other situations, the teacher must adjust the material to fit the needs of her particular class. This is how one teacher and a class of over-age potential drop outs went about it.

The unit grew out of a need to teach boys and girls proper school attire. Many items of clothing currently being chosen by them, are not suitable for school. Many of them are fads and not wise purchases in view of a limited clothing allowance. We tried to show the practicality of materials and styles and those most appropriate for school. In any case, the test of this unit's success will be noted in the improved school attire of the pupils.

PUPIL MOTIVATION

All of the major mail order companies in the city were contacted and each of them sent us a supply of catalogs. It was not essential for our purpose that these be the latest ones. The books were placed on a table and the pupils permitted to browze through them in their spare time, when other work was completed, or before classes began in the morning and afternoon sessions. As had been anticipated, this became a very popular pastime.

Whenever a unit can begin with an actual activity, and when the needs of carrying the activity forward determine the subject matter, we have a perfect educational set-up and an ideal approach. Following a discussion of good grooming, the teacher asked the class if they would like to visit a mail order house and see first hand how the public could best use the services of the company. Arrangements were made with the personnel department of the nearest company. This was followed by the following preparations during guidance lessons:

1. Correct grooming for a trip on the bus.
2. Manners on public conveyances and in places of business.
3. Things to look for and observations to be made in regard to ways of purchasing and also shipping merchandise.
4. Possibilities of future employment.
5. Courteous ways of addressing store personnel.
6. Questions to be asked of the guide in terms of things the class wished to know about shopping from a catalog, payment for merchandise, possibilities of future employment and requirements for securing work.
7. Films shown:
   Good Grooming For Girls - XG77
   How To Be Well Groomed - XH37

THE UNIT

The class visit to a mail order house gave the pupils much interesting and valuable information to be used in the language arts program.

We know that poor experiential background can retard the reader. When the home has not provided a good reading background, the teacher must help the child obtain a rich experience through discussion, field trips, pictures, books, maps, exhibits and films, in order to give meaning to vocabulary. This is especially important for retarded readers because aids give meaning to the printed page and will develop questions as an aid to discussion. It is easy to see how valuable the colored illustrations in the catalog become in this respect.

The pupils were encouraged to use the new vocabulary and the experiences learned in their reading through the following activities:

1. Making a dictionary of new words and their meanings. (See appendix)

2. Looking up topics in the World Book Encyclopedia. (See appendix for outlines and pages - 1961 edition was used)

3. Writing business letters legibly and carefully.
   a. Asking for permission to visit the mail order house.
   b. "Thank you" for courtesies shown the class.
   c. Learning to write letters applying for jobs in the concern and stating qualifications for employment.

4. Filling out forms.
   a. For merchandise order.
   b. Application for installment purchasing.
   c. Application to open a charge account.

We used the catalog to develop word perception skills, to answer questions of fact on the material read by use of meaningful assignments. Experience was given on forming judgments on the material read. Pupils also had to use judgments in shopping and being limited to a budget. Practice was provided in reading maps, graphs, picture diagrams, and charts. Sample lessons are included in the appendix. Comprehension was deepened and reading vocabulary increased.

Much has been said and written about the inability of modern arithmetic textbooks to give the pupil an adequate working knowledge of arithmetic he will use during his lifetime. One need only open any catalog to see the wealth of practical problems involved in shopping. Fundamental processes of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, and percentage, as well as measurement, are found on every page. Figuring weights, cost, rates, insurance, estimating postage, and costs are necessary in every order. Installment purchases open a whole avenue of practical problems. Figuring sales, federal excise taxes, and service charges with all the attendant arithmetic vocabulary make arithmetic meaningful. Comparison shopping from different catalogs teaches judgment and values and stimulates discussion and critical thinking. Pupils are made aware of the necessity of knowing the number facts and their application.

Specific lessons must be taught in reading code and size numbers, filling out order blanks, reading charts, tables, diagrams, and parcel post charges according to zones on maps. It is possible to discard all textbook problems for the duration of the unit and use the catalog for all arithmetic computation during the course of the unit. Sample problems are given in the appendix. These are included as suggestions and by no means cover the subject adequately nor limit the teacher or the class. As a motivation to fact learning and replacing drill on number combinations, the catalog problems are superior to any we have tried in the past in terms of practicality.

Problems can be individualized according to the interest of the boys as against that of the girls. Kinds of purchases made, give a stimulus to guidance lessons and great insight into pupil problems.

Parents not previously interested in helping pupils with arithmetic homework became interested in figuring costs when the catalog was used as a textbook in mathematics.

CATALOGS ENRICH UNDERSTANDING IN SOCIAL STUDIES

Mr. Fred Spiegel, President of the company bearing his name, generously sent us sample books of all the materials used in the catalogs. For the first time in their lives, our pupils were able to see and feel materials and actually learn what these were. The difference between plastic and leather, between cotton, linen, wool and silk, synthetic (man made) as against natural fibers was astonishing to them. They were very interested to learn what some materials like cashmere, camel hair, suede etc. were. They asked what the original of these materials were and the countries from which they came. This led us to an extention of the unit and to the encyclopedia and resulted in the following social studies outlines:

CLOTHING

I. Kinds of Clothing
   - a. Protective
   - b. Decorative

II. Clothing Materials
   - a. Sources
   - b. Uses

III. Style and Fashion

IV. How to Choose Clothes
   - a. Quality
   - b. Color
   - c. Suitable Style
   - d. Accessories
   - e. A Planned Wardribe

V. How to Care for Clothes
   - a. Daily Care
   - b. Cleaning
   - c. Storing

VI. Clothing of Other Lands

VII. How Clothing is Made
- a. The Clothing Industry
- b. Manufacturing and Selling Clothing
- c. Ready to Wear Clothes

VIII. Career Opportunities

QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between fad and fashion in clothing?
2. How do social conditions influence clothing fashions?
3. How does the information on a clothing tag or label protect the consumer?
4. What are the world's major clothing centers?
5. How can a person build a coordinated wardrobe?
6. Using a catalog from a mail order house, choose a wardrobe for yourself. Begin with a fall school wardrobe. What must you add for winter? Choose an Easter outfit. Be careful in your selection se that you may wear these to school during the spring. What must be added for summer? What is the least amount of money you would need for a wardrobe for a year?
7. Is it necessary to be outfitted completely every year? What can be used for more than one season? More than one year?

COTTON

I. Uses of Cotton
- a. Cotton-Fiber Product
- b. Cottonseed Products
- c. Cotton Linters Products

II. Kinds of Cotton
- a. American Upland Cotton
- b. Egyptian Cotton
- c. Sea-Island Cotton
- d. Asiatic Cottons

III. The Cotton Plant
- a. The Flower
- b. The Boll

IV. Cotton Growing Regions
- a. The United States
- b. Other Countries

V. How Cotton is Grown

VI. Marketing Cotton
- a. Ginning and Baling
- b. Classing
- c. Selling

VII. Making Cotton Into Cloth
- a. Cleaning
- b. Spinning
- c. Finishing

QUESTIONS

1. What is the leading cotton growing country?
2. What important invention decreased the cost of producing cotton?
3. What is the Cotton Belt?
4. How are airplanes often used in growing cotton?
5. How large is a bale of cotton?
6. Name two ways that the United States Government has helped the cotton grower.
7. Bring in samples of cotton materials. Use the list of cotton materials. (See appendix)

WOOL

I. Introduction
- a. Description
- b. History

II. Kinds of Wool

III. Qualities and Grades of Sheep's Wool

IV. Commercial Classifications

V. Shearing and Manufacture

QUESTIONS

1. How is wool fiber different from ordinary hair?
2. What makes wool fibers hold firmly together in yarn?
3. What kind of sheep give the most wool? The best wool?
4. How often are sheep usually sheared?

5. From what part of the sheep does the best wool come?

6. Make a list of articles for the home which are made of wool. Use your catalog.

TEXTILES

I. Classifications
   a. Fiber Sources

II. The Textile Industry

III. Testing Fabrics
   a. Cotton
   b. Linen
   c. Wool
   d. Silk
   e. Synthetic Fabrics

IV. Textile Regulations

V. History of Textiles

FURS

I. General Information

II. Where Furs Are Found

III. How Fur Is Made Into a Coat

IV. Names of Furs (See appendix)

LEATHER

I. General Information

II. Preparation of Raw Leather

III. Vegetable Tanning
   a. Sole Leather
   b. Bag, Case, Harness, Strap Leather

IV. Mineral Tanning

V. Dying Leather

VI. Finishing Leather

The class was divided into committees to study materials used in clothing. Each committee made a study of one kind of material. They

made graphs, maps, visited stores, and wrote stories following the outline we had made and copied on the board. They used the sample materials in the swatch books to illustrate the kinds of clothing which could be made from the various materials. Pictures were cut from the old catalogs to illustrate clothing and plan wardrobes. Some of the pupils went to the Museum of Science and Industry to see the processes involved in making plastics, weaving, etc.

We feel that this part of the unit utilized to the fullest extent, the experiences the child meets in his everyday environment. We tried to make the child's school day an actual life experience and developed a . child centered unit with regard to the individual as a member of the social group. We increased the sense of responsibility and taught the value of planning before executing problems. We feel we enlarged the knowledge of geography and enriched the understanding of materials as elements of dress.

One of the important and necessary learnings in the reading program is the use of reference materials. This unit, by making pupils go to the encyclopedia, was a valuable asset in teaching this skill. The catalog is also an excellent tool in teaching scanning, picking out important details, making value judgments, reading for information, and almost all of the skills suggested in the language arts guides. Much practice was provided in increasing ability to select relevant details for the specific purpose of wise shopping within the limits of income. It was necessary to organize material and to make reports. All of these are skills which ordinarily need much motivation and in the case of our slow and/or retarded reader difficult to teach due to the scarcity of appropriate materials.

The pages which follow are an appendix and include sample lessons and lists of words to increase vocabulary. We hope they will be useful as suggestive material which can be adjusted to other classes.

LORRAINE JOSEPH
Classroom Teacher

APPENDIX

(To Be Hectographed For The Pupil's Notebook)

SHOPPING BY CATALOG

Shopping from a catalog requires:

1. Careful reading.
2. Measuring accurately for sizes.
3. Correct figuring of sales tax.
4. Correct addition of weights.
5. Finding the shipping cost in the table provided.
6. Great care in filling out the order blank.
7. Careful attention to code numbers.

MAIL ORDER BUSINESS

1. Have you ever sent for something that you saw advertised in a magazine?
2. Were you satisfied with your purchase?
3. Was it more or less expensive to buy or mail?

QUESTIONS TO ASK, YOURSELF

1. Does the advertisement sound sensible?
2. Do all advertisements sound true?
3. Is there a sales tax or a luxury tax to be added?
4. What is meant by Federal Excise Tax?
5. Your order may ask for your size, measurement, shipping weight, and charges. Do you know them?

IF YOU WORK FOR A MAIL ORDER HOUSE YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

1. Hours of Work
2. Cafeteria Rules
3. Safety Hints
4. Shopping Passes
5. Payroll savings
6. Health and Welfare
7. Promotions
8. Discount on Buying Merchandise
9. Company Loans
10. Pension Plan

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN

plated	-	sterling
plastic	-	leather
machine-washable	-	hand-washable
composition sole	-	leather sole
machine stitched	-	hand stitched
automatic	-	manual start

freight - parcel post - express

1. Which of the above are more expensive? 2. Which will last longer?

INCREASING UNDERSTANDING

PHRASES TO EXPLAIN

advertised brands

available in sizes

complete selection

popular items

wide selection

manufacturer's price

list price

machine washable

hand washable

service charge

budget prices

wrinkle resistant

maximum shrinkage

separates - coordinates

wash and wear

charge account

parcel post charges

guaranteed merchandise

estimate charges

overcharges refunded

federal excise tax

sales tax

C.O.D.

gift certificates

unpaid balance

scheduled monthly payment

billing statement

credit standing

service or installation charges

dry clean only

WHAT IS MEANT BY

1. Proportion fit in clothing?
2. Expert tailoring in slacks?
3. A blend in a material?
4. Muted stripes in color?
5. Yard goods?
6. Free replacement if not satisfied.

LOOK IT UP

1. On what page will you find galoshes?
2. On what page will you find notebooks?
3. On what page will you find Christmas tree lights?
4. What is the price of the chess set - "Gold and Silver Chessmen?"
5. What is the price of the Economy Rollfast Middleweight Bicycle?
6. What is the price of the Deluxe Football Outfit?
7. What is the weight of the Father and Son Boxing Outfit?
8. What is the weight of the Auto Portable Transister Radio?
9. What is the postage on a package weighing 7 lbs., 6 ozs. mailed in Zone 3?
10. What is the postage on a package weighing 10 lbs., 4 ozs. mailed within the local zone?
11. On what pages is the index?
12. What is meant by a TOLL FREE CALL?
13. Who are the Chicago Suburban area customers? Name five suburbs.
14. How many pages of camping equipment are there?
15. If you could have your wish what would you buy from the catalog?

VOCABULARY

MATERIALS OF WOOL

Bunting	Wool crepe	Serge	Alpaca
cashmere	wool felt	tweed	llama
challis	wool flannel	velour	vicuna
cheviet	wool gabardine	woolen	sheepskin
covert	mohair	worsted	

VOCABULARY (continued)

COTTON MATERIALS

airplane cloth
baize
balloon cloth
batiste
broadcloth
buckram
bunting
calico
cambric
chenille
chintz
cotton gauze
corduroy
covert
cretonne
crinoline
denim
dimity
drill
duck
duvetyn
felt
flannel
foulard
gabardine
gingham
huck
khaki
lace
lawn
madras
muslin
nainsook
organdy
percale
pique
poplin
sateen
seersucker
serge
shantung
swiss
terry cloth
ticking
velveteen
voile

SILK MATERIALS

brocade
chiffon
crepe
faille
gauze
grosgrain
moire
mousseline de soie
peau de soie
ribbon
satin
shantung
taffeta
tulle
velvet

SYNTHETICS - MAN MADE

acetate
acrylan
bakelite
catalin
casein
celluloid
cellophane
dacron
dynel
fiber glass
foam rubber
melmac
nylon
koroseal
orlon
plexiglas
rayon
silicone
vinyl

NAMES OF FURS

fox
lamb
sheep
mink
beaver
chinchilla
ermine
kolinsky
leopard
muskrat
nutria
rabbit
racoon
sable
seal
skunk
stone martin

PRACTICAL PROBLEMS IN ARITHMETIC

1. Using the zone map find the cost of shipping a package:

   a. That weighs 10 lbs., 3 oz. to Zone 4.
   b. That weighs 22 lbs., 6 oz. to Zone 6.

2. Page 48 of your catalog advertises ladies slippers two pair for $5.50. Each pair costs $2.77. How much would you save if you bought two pair?

3. Mrs. Brown ordered these kitchen accessories:

   1 dish drainer $3.45 - 3 lb.
   1 rubber dust pan $1.29 - 2 lb. 12 oz.
   1 sink mat $ .75 - 1 lb. 2 oz.
   1 plate rack $1.29 - 1 lb. 4 oz.
   3 sets of mixing bowls at $2.19 a set - weighing 9 lb. each.

   Find the price and the total weight.

4. Ann bought a skirt advertised on page 25 for $3.88. The regular price before the sale was $4.98. How much did she save? The sales tax is 4%. How much did Ann pay for her skirt?

5. Dad bought a plaid coat advertised on page 117. The coat is $13.88. He bought two pair of slacks for $8.99. The sales tax is 4%. What is his bill?

6. Golf shirts are priced $2.83. How much will James pay for 4 of them? Shipping weight is 9 oz. for each shirt and the sales tax is 4%. What is the cost and the total weight?

7. Turn to page 227 in your catalog. Look at the chart of parcel post rates. What is the charge for a shipping weight of 3 lbs., in the local zone? In zones 1 and 2? In zone 5? How far away is zone5?

8. On the same page (227) you will find a list of amounts of sales tax in other states. What is the tax in Illinois? Which state has the highest tax rate? Which states have a 2% tax?

9. On page 228 is a table for payment on easy terms. If your unpaid balance is $140.00, what will you pay for the credit price? What amount is payable monthly?

10. Fill in the charge account agreement on page 230 of your catalog. Use ink. Ask your teacher for help if you do not understand any part of this application.

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(More than 680 examples of historic costumes in color.)

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CURRICULUM GUIDES

Chicago Public Schools Teaching Guide for the Language Arts
Grades 4-5-6 - page 41 - 42
Grades 7-8 - page 73

Supplement to Teaching Guide for Mathematics
Grades 4-5-6
Grades 7-8

Supplement to Teaching Guide for Social Studies
Grades 4-5-6 - page 150
Grades Kdg. 1-2-3